

THE OUT-OF-BODY-EXPERIENCE AS Gnostic REVELATION

Belief: A state or habit of mind in which trust confidence, or reliance is placed in some person or thing: **FAITH**.

Gnosis: Of, relating to, or characterized by knowledge or cognition.

Webster's Third New International Dictionary

When Robert Monroe began having his first out-of-body adventures in 1958 only two scholarly, scientific books had been written about the phenomenon in English: *The Projection of the Astral Body*, by Sylvan Muldoon & Hereward Carrington, and *Astral Projection: a Record of Out-of-Body Experiences*, by Oliver Fox. These books, for the most part, were couched in the turgid prose of their era, and had a relatively limited readership within parapsychological and occult circles.

To read these treatises today (especially Muldoon's), is to wade through highly detailed accounts of how the author exited his body, wandered around his home or neighborhood, then returned. They're valuable for the carefully recorded details of separation from the physical body, but make for often tedious reading because of the mundane circumstances described -- which actually gives them verisimilitude, since

anyone would imagine more interesting out-of-body trips if their accounts were fictional.

These gentlemen, perhaps because of their Victorian upbringing, did not have (or did not admit to having) the same kind of adventures that Monroe did. Monroe, for example devotes an entire chapter in *Journeys Out of The Body* to "Sexuality in the Second State," because, as he says:

Throughout the entire experimentation, evidence began to mount of a factor most vital to the Second State. Yet in all the esoteric literature ... there is no mention of this, not so much as one word of consideration or explanation. This factor is sexuality and the physical sex drive. (1)

My only fully conscious OOB (described in the first article of this series) certainly corroborates this observation, and all of the authors above, especially Monroe, state explicitly that command of the emotions (especially the sex-drive) is absolutely essential if we are to have any control over our out-of-body projections.

So Robert Monroe definitely broke new ground in the sparse OOB literature of his day because his modern, scientific training would not allow him to leave anything (no matter how personally delicate), out of the narrative. As *Journeys Out of The Body* approaches its conclusion, we're confident that we're reading an accurately rendered, erudite account of a highly anomalous state of consciousness. Then, in the next-to-last chapter, following a dry (and very

inconclusive) attempt to analyze his OOBES statistically, Monroe offers a hypothesis for how these experiences might fit into a wider paradigm -- an obvious, "What does it all mean?" summation of his data.

This hypothesis (pages 254 to 259) comes as something of a shock because it is written in a "fictional" narrative style very different from his previous prose. In this brief detour, Monroe describes the earth as being under more or less continuous observation by *extraterrestrial intelligences* -- a conception somewhat resembling the plot-line in Doris Lessing's novel *Shikasta* (1979).

Now, there's a huge chasm separating Sylvan Muldoon's contemplation of his living room furniture while out-of-body, and Monroe's hypothesis of god-like entities influencing life on planet earth! Assuming that Monroe is telling the truth as he perceived it (and there is no reason to believe that he isn't), then we've moved into deeper territory, indeed. As stated, our initial shock comes as a result of his use of an omniscient, "science fiction" point of view to describe it: ("*The researchers discovered the source to be the third planet in a Class 10 star system. As they orbited the planet itself, measurements and observation indicated that it did not follow the norm for propagation of intelligent life... etc, etc.*")

This brief stylistic lapse, inserted into the next-to-last chapter of *Journeys out of the Body* becomes predominant in Monroe's next book, *Far Journeys* (1985), where he defends his recourse to "allegory" with the explanation that it is the only way he knows how to communicate an essentially non-verbal reality:

The following is a deliberately free translation of nonverbal communication. To compound the rendering, most if not all represents the transposing of non-time-space events and ambience into replicas of conscious human physical experience. Thus a "humanizing" process is used extensively in the retelling--which may increase comprehension and simultaneously reduce accuracy. (2)

In this transition, we have suddenly shifted from a straightforward (if unusual) "psychological" treatise about out-of-body experiences (a-la Fox and Muldoon) into the realm of metaphysics. (In common usage, "metaphysics" has come to denote arcane philosophical speculation unrelated to anything scientifically provable, but I use it here in its most literal meaning of: "*beyond the physical.*") Considering Monroe's subject matter, this is probably unavoidable: When subjective awareness perceives the material world "objectively" (i.e. outside of the physical body), by definition it must perceive from a "metaphysical" dimension, such as "Locale II" (discussed in the previous article). This is the land of dreams we visit while asleep, which is often impossible to translate with complete accuracy into

physical terms. Anyone who has ever tried to interpret a numinous dream will understand the problem: some dreams are so "other" that they defy all description in words. Hence, Monroe is forced to use a style of writing usually associated with fantasy or science fiction to communicate a feeling for what such experiences are like.

Once the reader gets used to it, this approach seems natural enough, though one suspects that any author with less integrity than Monroe might be tempted to embellish his narrative: I confess that at times it feels like I'm reading a novel. Fortunately, in the Epilogue to *Far Journeys*, he returns to more scholarly prose when summing up what he had learned in the thirteen years since the publication of *Journeys Out Of The Body*.

That first book, as noted in the previous article, is the story of a shamanic initiation. This second book describes how the shaman is inducted into a realm of understanding which closely corroborates the general world view of the Gnostic religions of the first and second centuries C.E. Gnostic thought has become quite popularized in recent years, but at the time *Far Journeys* was published it was still the relatively uncelebrated pursuit of a handful of academic specialists. To understand the truly amazing correspondence between Monroe's out-of-body observations and

the world view of a few long-dead "heretics," let's briefly review the gnostic conception of reality.

To begin with, the term "Gnostic" refers to one who "knows" as contrasted with one who "believes." There is a substantial (though often extremely tricky) difference between "knowing" that you know something and "believing" that you know something -- for example, "knowing" that the sun will come up tomorrow morning, and "believing" that God created the universe in six days. The difference is that the gnostic has actually experienced the reality he espouses; he doesn't have to rely on belief because he has *gnosis* -- he *knows*. Unfortunately, the gnostic's form of "knowledge" is not always (or even very often) available to most people:

Among the majority of the followers of the movement "Gnosis" was understood not as meaning "knowledge" or "understanding," in our sense of the word, but "revelation." These little Gnostic sects and groups all lived in the conviction that they possessed a secret and mysterious knowledge, in no way accessible to those outside, which was not to be proved or propagated, but ... anxiously guarded as a secret. This knowledge of theirs was not based on reflection, on scientific inquiry and proof, but on revelation. (3)

It is highly probable that this "revelation" was obtained while in the out-of-body state because of the close correlation between Robert Monroe's descriptions of hyperspace (Locale-II) and the Gnostic Cosmos. This, of course, opens up an epistemological can of worms because such knowledge is not "scientifically provable." Which doesn't

invalidate it, but does make it difficult to prove to anyone who hasn't experienced the revelation.

For example: those who have had a fully conscious OOB^E know that human consciousness can perceive from outside of the physical body. Those who haven't had the experience, and who refuse to believe that it's possible, can argue all they want to against it, without affecting the experiencer's gnosis in the least. Either you know or you don't know. (As one who has had an OOB^E I am disinclined to dispute the reality of the phenomenon with skeptics who have not, though I confess that if I hadn't had the experience I'd probably be a skeptic myself!) It is my intention here to supply evidence from a number of sources to at least open the possibility of out-of-body awareness and the reality it reveals to any open-minded "agnostic" -- literally: one who "doesn't know."

In his last book, *Ultimate Journey* (1994), Monroe repeats the words "Know," and "Known" (usually in caps) again and again. Though he never uses the word "Gnosis," it is obvious that he is familiar with the deepest meaning of the term and that the entire concept is essential to his approach to experience. The following is the sort of statement that a Gnostic makes when describing the process of moving through belief toward knowledge:

The Different Overview you are beginning to consider can be at most only a belief until you begin to test it for validity within your own ongoing experience during your life as an active Human Mind. As small beliefs convert to Knowns, perhaps larger Different Overview beliefs will follow the same path -- until you are free. (4)

We can eliminate a huge problem if we replace the word "belief" with "hypothesis" -- an hypothesis is a tentative description of reality, subject to modification by new data. This is a more accurate mind-set than belief, because belief quickly ossifies into dogma. Although beliefs facilitate tranquil living (because they "protect" us from having to constantly reevaluate our experience), they can all too easily block our perception of new realities. In the quotation above, Monroe is actually describing the scientific method for how any hypothesis must be subjected to proof. If the word "gnosis" is to have any meaning at all, it must always emerge from this process.

I have emphasized the distinction between gnosis and belief because it is essential for evaluating Monroe's out-of-body corroboration of the Gnostic world view. The most striking thing one discovers about Gnostic cosmology is its singularly dark view of human experience. For the Gnostic, the world was created, not by a benevolent Supreme Being, but by a tyrannical demiurge: a demonic entity whose main goal is to keep humans trapped in matter:

We must remember that the role of the demiurge is not

exhausted in his feat of creation, but that, through his "Law" as well as through cosmic Fate, he exercises a despotic world rule aimed mainly at enslaving man. (5)

What is the purpose of such enslavement? Why would "God" and his agents, called by the Gnostics "Archons" (Gk.: "Rulers"), want to imprison the human soul in matter? Their answer to this question (presumably obtained via revelations such as out-of-body observation), is that human beings generate a form of energy which the gods need for food.

What then is the interest of the Archons in opposing the exodus of the soul from the world? The gnostic answer is thus recounted by Epiphanius: "They say that the soul is the food of the Archons and Powers without which they cannot live, because (the soul) is of the dew from above and gives them strength." (6)

This idea is also found in the Vedic tradition of India, where it is explicitly stated in the Upanishads that the "Devas" (gods) feed off of human energy:

[Man] is like a beast for the Devas. For verily, as many beasts nourish a man, thus does every man nourish the Devas. If only one beast is taken away, it is not pleasant; how much more when many are taken! Therefore it is not pleasant to the Devas that men should know this. (7)

In contemporary terms, spiritual intelligences ("gods") preside over life on earth in much the way that we maintain cattle feed-lots or cultivate broiler chickens on factory farms. Essentially, they're "soul-eaters." It's a heretical and shocking idea -- diametrically opposed to the reality promulgated by our World Monotheisms. (Which is one of many

reasons why the Gnostics didn't last long: by the fourth century C.E. the "Archons" of the Christian Church had effectively persecuted all organized Gnostic sects into extinction!)

Robert Monroe gets a first inkling of this "Different Overview" in *Journeys Out of The Body* when he describes a sequence of events which took place in 1960--about two years after he began having regular out-of-body experiences. In the first event, he experienced an energy probe that entered his forehead (third-eye chakra?) and began exploring his mind for something he couldn't comprehend:

It had intelligence of a form beyond my comprehension, and it came directly (down the beam?) into my head, and seemed to be searching every memory in my mind. I was truly frightened because I was powerless to do anything about this intrusion. (8)

About a week later, the same thing occurred again, only this time he became aware that the "something" that the entities were searching for was related to some form of energy within his psyche:

I got the impression of huge pipes, so ancient they were covered with undergrowth and rust. Something like oil was passing through them, but it was much higher in energy than oil, and vitally needed and valuable elsewhere (assumption: not on this material planet). This has been going on for aeons of time, and there were other force groups here, taking out the same material on some highly competitive basis, and the material was convertible at some distant point or civilization for something very valuable to entities far above my ability to understand. (9)

This high-energy substance, "something like oil," of course relates directly to the gnostic conception of "dew" extracted from the human soul, quoted above. About two weeks later, the entities again invade Monroe's psyche. After they've finished their mind probe and leave his body, he describes it thus:

Then they seemed to soar up into the sky, while I called after them, pleading. Then I was sure that their mentality and intelligence were far beyond my understanding. It is an impersonal, cold intelligence, with none of the emotions of love or compassion which we respect so much, yet this may be the omnipotence we call God. Visits such as these in mankind's past could well have been the basis for all of our religious beliefs, and our knowledge today could provide no better answers than we could a thousand years past.

By this time, it was getting light, and I sat down and cried, great deep sobs as I have never cried before, because I knew without any qualification or future hope of change that the God of my childhood, of the churches, of religion throughout the world was not as we worshipped him to be -- that for the rest of my life, I would 'suffer' the loss of this illusion. (10)

This, if nothing else, is a gnostic initiation -- undoubtedly similar to thousands that have occurred to isolated individuals throughout human history. But we don't read of Monroe's complete discovery until *Far Journeys* -- that's where the full force of the ancient gnostic world view emerges in chilling detail...

It is now a good two-decades later, and Robert Monroe has become, by any definition, a Master Shaman -- able to leave his body at will, virtually whenever he pleases. He is

comfortable travelling in "Locale-II" (though he no longer calls it that, feeling it's too vague a label for what he's now perceiving), and has become accustomed to meeting discarnate entities there. He even "makes friends" with a few and has ongoing interactions with them.

Two of these beings, arbitrarily labeled "AA" and "BB," occupy a good deal of his attention. Their communication in hyperspace does not involve words as we understand them, and is to all intents and purposes "telepathic." Obviously, spoken language (which consists of vibrations produced in a physical larynx and enunciated via tongue and mouth through the earth's atmosphere), is irrelevant in the non-physical realms. In hyperspace, information is conveyed, not serially, in words, sentences and paragraphs, but instantly in one comprehensive gestalt. Monroe has coined the word "rote" to describe these packets of information, and it is precisely because of the difficulty he has in translating them into word sequences, that he often uses fiction techniques in his writing.

At any rate, in Chapter 12 of *Far Journeys*, Robert Monroe receives a rote from the discarnate entity, BB. The translation takes up ten pages: 162 to 172, and is a devastatingly accurate synopsis of the Gnostic world view. (This section is, of course, much too long to quote here in

full, so the following is a brief summation -- "Ident" is Monroe's term for "Mental name or "address," i.e., energy pattern of item," and "Loosh" might be described in gnostic terms as "the dew from above [that] gives them strength.") Here's the "Loosh Rote" as translated by Robert Monroe into English:

Someone, Somewhere (or both, in millions, or uncountable) requires, likes, needs, values, collects, drinks, eats, or uses as a drug (sic) a substance ident Loosh. (Electricity, oil, oxygen, gold, wheat, water, land, old coins, uranium.) This is a rare substance in Somewhere, and those who possess Loosh find it vital for whatever it is used for.

Faced with this question of Supply and Demand (a universal law of Somewhere), Someone decided to produce it artificially, so to speak, rather than search for it in its "natural" form. He decided to build a Garden and grow Loosh. (11)

"Someone" (who else but the Gnostic demiurge?), turns out to be one entity among many: a god among gods. As the rote unfolds we learn how Someone seeded His Garden (obviously planet earth), and evolved life forms upon it to eventually produce human beings. He then appointed Collectors to gather the Loosh/Emotional Energy from the earth's entities, among whom humans are by far the best producers.

Someone, his work completed, returned to Somewhere and occupied himself with other matters. Loosh production stayed at a constant level under the supervision of the Collectors. (12)

The Loosh harvest initially involved the creation of

natural disasters (earthquakes, hurricanes, etc.), to kill off large numbers of creatures, since Loosh was easier to gather upon the deaths of the organisms generating it. Then it was discovered that different forms of "stress" generated in the human population would release Loosh without having to kill the organism. This was because Someone, as an experiment, injected a "Piece of Himself" into the human species. This was done to maintain more or less constant stress in each individual since the human would always "seek to satisfy the attraction this tiny mote of Himself engendered as it sought reunion with the infinite Whole."

From experience, the Collectors have evolved an entire technology with complementary tools for the harvesting of Loosh from the Type 4M [i.e. human] units. The most common have been named love, friendship, family, greed, hate, pain, guilt, disease, pride, ambition, ownership, possession, sacrifice -- and on a larger scale, nations, provincialism, wars, famine, religion, machines, freedom, industry, trade, to list just a few. Loosh production is higher than ever before... (13)

From a Gnostic perspective, the "Loosh Collectors" are the "Archons" -- the dreaded rulers of hyperspace who had to be avoided at all costs when leaving the body at death.

The Archons collectively rule over the world, and each individually in his sphere is a warder of the cosmic prison. Their tyrannical world-rule is called heimarmene, universal fate ... [This universal fate] aims at the enslavement of man. As guardian of his sphere, each Archon bars the passage to the souls that seek to ascend after death, in order to prevent their escape from the world and their return to God. (14)

But because all humans contain a "Piece of Someone"

within them, they cannot really die, so are reincarnated over and over again as Loosh producers in spacetime. The true Gnostic, then, is the person who has objectively observed this vicious cycle (presumably by "getting outside of himself" via OOBÉ) and, with his newfound knowledge (gnosis), is enabled to escape into the truly spiritual realms beyond the earth environment. This is only possible because the Divine (sic?) spark within him renders him immortal.

Enclosed in the soul is the spirit, or "pneuma" (called also the "spark"), a portion of the divine substance from beyond which has fallen into the world; and the Archons created man for the express purpose of keeping it captive there ... In its unredeemed state the pneuma thus immersed in soul and flesh is unconscious of itself, benumbed, asleep, or intoxicated by the poison of the world: in brief, it is "ignorant." Its awakening and liberation is effected through "knowledge..." The goal of gnostic striving is the release of the "inner man" from the bonds of the world and his return to his native realm of light. (15)

It's important to note that Gnostic cosmology perceives the physical earth as surrounded by concentric hyperspatial "spheres" or "rings" which were regarded by them as palpable barriers. Each one of these circle-realms is presided over by an Archon whose only purpose in life is to capture any passing souls who may have escaped the lower rings.

These intermediary worlds, these circles ranged in echelons ... are totally invisible to us. It is through intuition, or rather through revelation, through gnosis, that the Gnostic knows of their existence ... Our own matter, that of the earth ... is in some way the seed of the ethereal particles of the hyper-world, but grown infinitely heavier. Little by little, these particles

have fallen down to our level as the result of a primordial drama which comprises the history of our universe, in the same manner that particles of dust and debris are slowly deposited at the bottom of marine abysses to form sediment. (16)

When I read this seemingly exotic idea for the first time, I assumed (like most gnostic scholars probably do), that it was a theological allegory. "Surely," one without gnosis might say, "the idea of *literal* rings around the earth is the product of some ancient philosopher's metaphorical imagination." Then I came across this passage in *Far Journeys* -- Monroe is here describing what he routinely encounters in his (by now vastly expanded) out-of-body explorations:

Around the planet were rings of haze, gigantic thick rings, of indeterminate number. Demarcation between them was vague as wisps and tendrils reached down from one to the other. Except the ring nearly touching the planet itself. It appeared isolated ... You could spend thousands of years in the rings and never explore all aspects of them. Some parts are great, some not so great. I was told that whatever man can think of is somewhere in these rings ... Also I was told some humans do spend thousands of years here, rotating in and out of physical earth life. (17)

In other words, the "rings" constitute the heaven and hell worlds which have always been a part of human mythology. They are made up of the belief systems of both the discarnate entities who dwell within them, and similar true believers still incarnate in physical bodies. Indeed, in *Ultimate Journey*, his third book, Monroe no longer refers to them as rings at all, but as "Belief System Territories."

William Buhlman, another contemporary gnostic-shaman, in describing out-of-body perception in his book *Adventures Beyond the Body* (1996), portrays these discarnate realms as "consensus environments."

A consensus environment is any environment or reality that is created and maintained by the thoughts of a group of individuals. For example, the heavens of each religious group are created by the thoughts and beliefs of their respective inhabitants. Like all realities, the consensus environments are molded by the group consciousness. Many of the consensus environments are extremely old and resistant to change ... In a consensus environment, our thoughts influence our personal energy but not the energy surrounding us. The various heavens referred to by Saint John in Revelation and Mohammed in the Koran are classic examples of consensus environments. These nonphysical cities and structures exist within the second and third energy dimensions and continue to be molded and maintained by the group consciousness of millions of nonphysical inhabitants. When we enter these environments, our thoughts will not change the structures encountered. (18)

Obviously, if these rings are the objective correlatives of the subtle energies that we label "belief," they must be to some degree "illusory," very much like dreams, which for all of their insubstantiality, are certainly real enough while we're experiencing them. One way to conceptualize this space *in toto* might be to imagine it as analogous to the Jungian "Collective Unconscious" -- except that here it is perceived *objectively*, outside of the body, rather than as usually experienced: *subjectively*, within our heads.

In the Gnostic conception, each soul leaving the physical body at death, is challenged to pass through these

rings. If the soul is locked into a strong belief system it will be attracted to the ring corresponding to it: Christians go to Christian heavens or hells, Muslims go to Muslim heavens or hells, etc. Those who spent their earth lives locked into other beliefs wind up exactly where their heads are at the moment of death. This of course, is exactly what the *Bardo Thodol* describes as the first reality perceived by the soul as it leaves the body at death:

The apparitional visions seen by the deceased in the Intermediate State are not visions of reality, but nothing more than the hallucinatory embodiments of the thought-forms born of the mental-content of the percipient; or, in other words, they are the intellectual impulses which have assumed personified form in the after-death dream state. (19)

Buhlman states it more succinctly:

When your physical body dies, you will automatically go to the energy level (frequency) of the universe that corresponds to your personal vibratory rate. (20)

Thus: "Belief System Territories," or, if you prefer: "Consensus Environments."

The shaman's special talent is the ability to visit these spaces while still incarnate -- he or she doesn't have to wait until the moment of death to perceive them. And, like visiting a foreign country here on earth, it isn't necessary for the visitor to share the beliefs of its inhabitants to be able to perceive their consensus reality "objectively" -- i.e. outside of that particular belief

system.

Here, accompanied by his discarnate companion BB, Monroe describes what it's like to actually enter the Belief System Territories, corroborating that they are mirror images of many physical life environments:

We began to enter the familiar cleared areas in the haze. Houses, parks, fields of growing plants, woods, forests, large buildings, rows of churches, it went on endlessly. Humanoid forms were busily occupying themselves in numerous earth-type activities. (21)

Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688--1772), the great Swedish mystic, spent the last three decades of his life exploring the same realms that Robert Monroe did in our era. He was definitely a shaman (though he is seldom described as such), and he probably wouldn't have liked that label himself, being very much a Protestant Christian -- a belief system which unfortunately colors all of his discarnate perceptions. Here he describes what "the rings" (though he doesn't use that nomenclature) looked like about 200 years before Monroe visited them:

Be it known that the spiritual world, in external appearance, is altogether similar to the natural [i.e. "physical"] world. Lands, mountains, hills, valleys, plains, fields, lakes, rivers and fountains appear there ... Man, there, is an angel and a spirit. This is premised that it may be known that the universe of the spiritual world is altogether similar to the universe of the natural world. (22)

The main goal of the Gnostic was to eliminate belief entirely from his life, replacing it with gnosis. In which

case, his soul was enabled to transcend the rings entirely -- to escape into the "True Reality," to find the "True God" beyond the Belief System Territories, exempt now from reincarnation in the earth life system, which (as Buddhism has always asserted), is preeminently an "illusion" anyway.

Man's task is to regain his lost homeland by wrenching himself free of the snares and illusions of the real, to rediscover the original unity, to find again the kingdom of this God who was unknown, or imperfectly known, to all preceding religions. (23)

This was no easy task, even for the Gnostics, because one always had to run the gauntlet of the Archons. Who, or what, the Archons are has been argued about for millennia, and it is still not easy to differentiate exactly what they represent. The authors of the *Bardo Thodol* mention Peaceful and Wrathful Deities, who are conceived of as the personification of our own beliefs and could easily be thought of as Archons -- this fits the scheme outlined here.

But there the Archons' primary function as "guardians of the threshold" seems to end. Although Swedenborg describes angels and demons presiding over the various heavens and hells, entry into those realms is not seen to involve any encounter with either Loosh Collectors or Archons. For example:

After the first state is passed through ... the man-spirit is let into the state of his interiors, or into the state of his interior will and the thought therefrom, in which he had been in the world, when being

left to himself he thought freely and without restraint. Into this state he glides unconsciously. (24)

Despite the rather twisted prose, we recognize that "interiors" translates as "beliefs," and the "state of his interiors" (unless they are totally unique to that individual), would correspond to our definition of consensus realities. So what happened to the Gnostic Archons? Buhlman doesn't mention meeting them, nor do Fox and Muldoon. Monroe's concept of "Loosh Collectors" fits their description, but it is highly significant that although he learned about them from the "Loosh Rote," he never (except as presented in quotations 8 through 10, above), describes encountering other discarnate entities resembling either Archons or Collectors -- and he definitely doesn't perceive the rings as being subject to their specific control.

Initially disturbed by the Loosh Rote, Monroe had a great deal of trouble integrating it into his "Reality Percept;" he goes so far as to imagine a Guernsey cow being milked by its owner as an allegory of the human/Archon-Collector relationship:

...But now, at sunset, it is time again. She must go to His place. There is a goading pain on her underside that tells her this ... While she eats, He will relieve the pain until morning. After that the Man will walk away with white water in a round container. The Guernsey does not know where he got the white water nor why He desires it. Not knowing, she doesn't care. (25)

This may be too benign a view when compared with the

Gnostics' conception of the Archons as demonic prison guards. Monroe eventually came to terms with the Loosh Rote after consulting a high-level discarnate entity, he calls an "Inspec" (for "intelligent species"), who advised him while out-of-body. Eventually, he accepts this reality as an unavoidable truth of existence: since we cannot do anything about it anyway (like paying taxes), we are best advised to accept it and get on with our own personal growth. Perhaps that is the solution the Gnostics chose as well, though many legitimate questions remain. Perhaps significantly, Monroe never mentions it again.

Obviously, there is more to this subject than meets the eye. By the time we reach *Ultimate Journey*, the final book in Monroe's trilogy, the structure of hyperspace has become infinitely more complex, though our Archon questions (plus a few others raised in his previous volumes), are never completely answered. Before we can examine Monroe's magnum opus, we must first attempt to fill those gaps with data obtained from other sources. This will be subject of the next article in this series.

Excerpted from The Structure of Reality, a work in progress.

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